

MAY

May 28, 2003

As of May 21, APHIS confirmed detections of *Ralstonia solanacearum* race 3, biovar 2 on geraniums in 27 States and 127 establishments (excluding the MI and NH rooting stations), primarily in geraniums from Kenya. The number of positive testing facilities in each state is tallied as follows: AL (9), AR (2), CO (1), DE (1), GA (2), ID (1), IL (4), IN (4), IA (6), KS (3), KY (1), MD (3), ME (1), MI(13), MN (4), MO (6), NH (1), NJ (1), NY (3), NC (13), OH (7), PA (8), SC (8), TN (1), TX (7), VA (10), and WI (7). All of the 921 affected nurseries have been released. APHIS is in the process of following up on suspect geraniums linked to a few shipments from Guatemala that tested positive.

An Interim Rule was published in the Federal Register (Vol. 68, No. 100, Friday, May 23, 2003, pp. 28115-28119) amending the regulations in 7 CFR Part 319. This amendment was effective May 16, 2003. An additional declaration must appear on the phytosanitary certificate with all articles of *Pelargonium* spp. and *Solanum* spp. imported into the US, except those imported under the Canadian greenhouse-grown restricted plant program. The additional declaration must state either that the articles of *Pelargonium* spp. and *Solanum* spp. were produced in a production facility that has been tested and found to be free of *Ralstonia solanacearum* race 3 biovar 2 or that *Ralstonia solanacearum* race 3 biovar 2 is not known to occur in the region in which the articles were produced. The public may submit comments on the Interim Rule up to July 22, 2003. See <http://frwebgate3.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/waisgate.cgi?WAISdocID=06404825146+0+0+0&WAIAction=retrieve>

May 21, 2003

As of May 19th, no new samples have been submitted to the USDA-APHIS-PPQ-CPHST Lab, Beltsville, MD since May 7, 2003 and no confirmed positives have been reported since April 28, 2003. As of May 19, the APHIS confirmed detections of *Ralstonia solanacearum* race 3, biovar 2 on geraniums still stands at 27 States and 127 establishments (excluding the MI and NH rooting stations). The number of positive testing facilities in each state remains the same, tallied as follows: AL (9), AR (2), CO (1), DE (1), GA (2), ID (1), IL (4), IN (4), IA (6), KS (3), KY (1), MD (3), ME (1), MI (12), MN (4), MO (6), NH (1), NJ (1), NY (3), NC (13), OH (7), PA (8), SC (8), TN (1), TX (7), VA (10), and WI (7). There are currently 10 nurseries still on hold in one state. A total of 911 nurseries have been released.

May 14, 2003

No new samples have been submitted to the USDA-APHIS-PPQ-CPHST Lab, Beltsville, MD since May 7, 2003 and no confirmed positives have been reported since April 28, 2003. As of May 12, the APHIS confirmed detections of *Ralstonia solanacearum* race 3,

biovar 2 on geraniums still stands at 27 States and 127 establishments (excluding the MI and NH rooting stations). The number of positive testing facilities in each state remains the same, tallied as follows: AL (9), AR (2), CO (1), DE (1), GA (2), ID (1), IL (4), IN (4), IA (6), KS (3), KY (1), MD (3), ME (1), MI (12), MN (4), MO (6), NH (1), NJ (1), NY (3), NC (13), OH (7), PA (8), SC (8), TN (1), TX (7), VA (10), and WI (7). There are currently 12 nurseries still on hold in two states. A total of 907 nurseries have been released.

May 7, 2003

Detections of *Ralstonia solanacearum* race 3 biovar 2 at nursery facilities that received suspect geraniums are being confirmed but on a much less frequent basis. As of May 6, there were 27 States with positive confirmations in 127 establishments, excluding the two rooting stations, tallied by state: AL (9), AR(2), CO(1), DE (1), GA (2), ID(1), IL (4), IN (4), IA (6), KS (3), KY(1), MD (3), ME(1), MI (12), MN (4), MO (6), NH(1), NJ(1), NY(3), NC (13), OH (7), PA (8), SC (8), TN (1), TX (7), VA (10), and WI (7).

There are currently 28 nurseries still on hold with control actions having taken place at 134 establishments. Remaining locations with positive testing facilities are making arrangements to destroy plants and disinfect facilities. To date, 891 establishments have been released. The number of samples being sent to the Center for Plant Health Science and Technology Beltsville laboratory for confirmatory testing is decreasing. The Action Plan is being revised based on substantial input from the field. PPQ will be releasing a new version after a program review is completed. An interim update was posted to the PPQ internet site, and provides instructions from the PPQ Permit Unit to the diagnostic screening laboratories for the disposition of *R. solanacearum* race 3 biovar 2 cultures and samples. In mid-June, 2003, two meetings will be convened. The first one will be a review of the *R. solanacearum* race 3 biovar 2 eradication program in geraniums. In the second meeting, experts will provide information for PPQ to draft Action Plans that will be called into play in the event *R. solanacearum* race 3 biovar 2 is found in crops such as potatoes.

APRIL

April 30, 2003

There were three additional detections of *Ralstonia solanacearum* race 3 biovar 2 at nursery facilities that received suspect geraniums confirmed in the last week. As of April 28th, there are 27 States with positive confirmations as follows with the 127 establishments, excluding the two rooting stations, tallied by state AL (9), AR(2), CO(1), DE (1), GA (2), ID(1), IL (4), IN (4), IA (6), KS (3), KY(1), ME (1), MD (3), MI (13), MN (4), MO (6), NH(1), NJ(1), NY(3), NC (13), OH (7), PA (8), SC (8), TN (1), TX (7), VA (10), and WI (7).

There was a positive confirmation on Guatemalan material in one state and we are following up with the importing company with information requests. There are currently 56 nurseries still on hold with control actions having taken place at 132 establishments. To date, 863 establishments have been released. The numbers of samples received from plants with symptoms has slowed down considerably in their arrival at the Center for Plant Health Science and Technology Beltsville laboratory after screening at the state or cooperating university diagnostic laboratories. New instructions are now posted on our *Ralstonia* website from the PPQ Permit Unit for the disposition of cultures and samples they may be retained. A program review and an action planning meeting for *Ralstonia* detections in other solanaceous crops is scheduled for mid-June.

April 23, 2003

Detections of *Ralstonia solanacearum* race 3 biovar 2 at nursery facilities that received suspect geraniums are being confirmed but on a much less frequent basis. As of April 21st, there are 26 States with positive confirmations as follows with the 124 establishments, excluding the two rooting stations, tallied by state: AL (9), AR(2), CO(1), DE (1), GA (2), ID(1), IL (4), IN (4), IA (6), KS (3), KY(1), MD (3), MI (12), MN (4), MO (6), NH(1), NJ(1), NY(3), NC (12), OH (7), PA (8), SC (8), TN (1), TX (7), VA (10), and WI (7). There are currently 86 nurseries on still on hold with control actions having taken place at 122 establishments. Remaining locations with positive testing facilities are making arrangements for control and disinfection actions. To date, 833 establishments have been released. The numbers of samples from plants with symptoms are slowing down considerably in their arrival at the Center for Plant Health Science and Technology Beltsville laboratory after screening at the state or cooperating university diagnostic laboratories. The Action Plan is being revised based on substantial input from the field. PPQ will be releasing a new version revision after the season winds down and a program review is completed. An important update to the plan that is coming includes instructions from the PPQ Permit Unit to the diagnostic screening laboratories for the disposition of cultures and samples that may have been retained.

April 16, 2003

Detections of *Ralstonia solanacearum* race 3 biovar 2 at nursery facilities that received suspect geraniums continue to be confirmed. As of April 14th, there are 26 States with positive confirmations as follows with the 123 establishments, excluding the two rooting stations, tallied by state: AL (9), AR(2), CO(1), DE (1), GA (2), ID(1), IL (4), IN (4), IA (6), KS (3), KY(1), MD (3), MI (11), MN (4), MO (6), NH(1), NJ(1), NY(3), NC (12), OH (7), PA (8), SC (8), TN (1), TX (7), VA (10), and WI (7).

With some additional nurseries held because of trace forward investigations, there are currently 148 nurseries on hold with control actions having taken, or are taking place at 112 establishments and other locations with positive testing facilities are making arrangements for control and disinfection actions. To date, 771 establishments have been released. The numbers of samples from plants with symptoms are slowing down in

their arrival at the Center for Plant Health Science and Technology Beltsville laboratory after screening at the state or cooperating university diagnostic laboratories.

April 9, 2003

Detections of *Ralstonia solanacearum* race 3 biovar 2 at nursery facilities that received suspect geraniums continue to be confirmed. As of April 8th, there are 26 States with positive confirmations as follows with the 119 establishments, excluding the two rooting stations, tallied by state: AL (9), AR(2), CO(1), DE (1), GA (2), ID(1), IL (4), IN (4), IA (6), KS (3), KY(1), MD (3), MI (11), MN (4), MO (6), NH(1), NJ(1), NY(2), NC (12), OH (7), PA (8), SC (8), TN (1), TX (7), VA (10), and WI (4).

With some additional nurseries held because of trace forward investigations, there are currently 312 nurseries on hold with control actions having taken or are taking place at 82 establishments and other locations with positive testing facilities are making arrangements for control and disinfection actions. To date, 587 establishments have been released. Samples from plants with symptoms continue to arrive at the Center for Plant Health Science and Technology Beltsville laboratory after screening at the state or cooperating university diagnostic laboratories. The *Ralstonia* action plan revisions, clarifications, and new information will be released soon in version 4. Two new features have been added to the USDA *Ralstonia* website. First, a link to the very informative University of Florida *Ralstonia* site has been added. Also, images of *Ralstonia* affecting tomatoes, potatoes, and tobacco have been posted in the *Ralstonia* Symptom Image Gallery at <http://www.aphis.usda.gov/ppq/ep/ralstonia/gallery/index.html>.

April 2, 2003

Detections of *Ralstonia solanacearum* race 3 biovar 2 at nursery facilities that received suspect geraniums continue to be confirmed. As of April 1st, there are 26 States with positive confirmations as follows with the 103 establishments including the two rooting stations tallied by state: AL (5), AR(2), CO(1), DE (1), GA (2), ID(1), IL (4), IN (4), IA (3), KS (3), KY(1), MD (3), MI (11), MN (4), MO (5), NH(1), NJ(1), NY(2), NC (12), OH (6), PA (4), SC (7), TN (1), TX (7), VA (8), and WI (4). With some additional nurseries held because of trace forward investigations, there are still 338 nurseries on hold with control actions taking place at 68 establishments and other locations with positive testing facilities are making arrangements for control and disinfection actions. Samples from plants with symptoms continue to arrive at the Center for Plant Health Science and Technology Beltsville laboratory after screening at the state or cooperating university diagnostic laboratories. The *Ralstonia* action plan revisions, clarifications, and new information will be released soon in version 4 and posted on this website.

MARCH

March 26, 2003

Detections of *Ralstonia solanacearum* race 3 biovar 2 at nursery facilities that received suspect geraniums from Kenya continue to be confirmed. As of March 26th, there are 20 States with positive confirmations as follows with the 71 establishments including the two rooting stations tallied by state: AL (5), AR(1), DE (1), GA (2), IL (3), IN (4), IA (3), KS (3), MD (3), MI (5), MN (4), MO (3), NC (8), OH (3), PA (1), SC (5), TN (1), TX (6), VA (6), WI (4). With some additional nurseries held because of trace forward investigations, there are still 763 nurseries on hold, 338 have been released. Those locations with positive testing facilities have taken or are making arrangements for control and disinfection actions. Samples from plants with symptoms continue to arrive at the Center for Plant Health Science and Technology Beltsville laboratory after screening at the state or cooperating university diagnostic laboratories. An addendum to the *Ralstonia* action plan was sent to the field clarifying definitions and the actions to be taken for destruction.

March 19, 2003

Because of concern about possible additional foreign shipments of geraniums infected with *Ralstonia solanacearum* race 2 biovar 2, a WTO Notice was prepared notifying countries of new phytosanitary certification requirements. Effective March 19, 2003, all imports of propagative material of *Pelargonium* spp. and *Solanum* spp. must be accompanied by a phytosanitary certificate which contains an additional declaration either that the consignment was produced in a facility that has been tested by an APHIS-approved test and found free of *Ralstonia solanacearum* race 3 biovar 2, or that *Ralstonia solanacearum* race 2 biovar 2 is not present in the country of origin. Of the countries currently importing geraniums to the US, Costa Rica, Guatemala, Kenya, and Mexico, have been notified of these new requirements. Spain, Israel, and Canada are in the process of being notified as well. An interim rule reflecting this change is in the final stages of approval.

Detections of *Ralstonia solanacearum* race 3 biovar 2 at nursery facilities that received suspect geraniums from Kenya continue to be confirmed. As of March 17th, there are 17 States with positive confirmations as follows with the 43 establishments including the two rooting stations tallied by state: AL (2), DE (1), GA (2), IA (3), IL (1), IN (4), KS (2), MD (3), MI (5), MN (2), MO (2), NC (6), NH (1), SC (3), TN (1), VA (3), WI (2). With some additional nurseries held because of trace forward investigations, there are still 730 nurseries on hold, 230 have been released, and 23 have taken control and disinfection actions. The remainder of positive testing facilities are making arrangements to take control and disinfection actions. Samples from plants with symptoms continue to arrive at the Center for Plant Health Science and Technology Beltsville laboratory after screening at the state or cooperating university diagnostic laboratories (Pest Detection and Management Programs).

March 12, 2003

New detections of *Ralstonia solanacearum* race 3 biovar 2 continue with additional states having positive testing facilities. The totals now stand as follows, with the number of nurseries in each state in parenthesis: Georgia (2), Illinois (1), Indiana (3), Iowa (1), Kansas (2), Maryland (2), Michigan (5), Missouri (2), New Hampshire (1), North Carolina (2), Tennessee (1), Virginia (3), and Wisconsin (2). Samples from these and other states continue to be submitted through state and cooperating university diagnostic laboratories to the CPHST laboratory in Beltsville, Maryland. Samples may take 3 or 4 days to get final results after the screening by the state. As of March 10, of the original 800 nursery locations to be held for receiving suspect geraniums of Kenyan origin, 108 have been released from further quarantine and 27 have tested positive. Those that tested positive are having geraniums from suspect shipments and commingled plant material destroyed with their facilities disinfected. The remainder are being held until time and temperature regimes can be met to allow disease symptom expression to appear.

March 5, 2003

The USDA "Action Plan for *Ralstonia solanacearum* race 3 biovar Found in Nursery Facilities" was made available to States and industry on February 27, 2003. Since that time, federal and State inspectors have placed additional holds on plants at a majority of nursery facilities on the master list of approximately 800 establishments that fell within the windows of risk for having received geraniums potentially infected with *Ralstonia solanacearum* race 3 biovar 2. In addition to the above 6 positives found in 4 states (IN, IL, MI, WI) reported previously, there have now been five total additional positives for *Ralstonia solanacearum* race 3 biovar 2 in three additional states: 2 in Georgia, 1 in Tennessee, 1 in Virginia and 1 in Wisconsin. There are a number of samples submitted that are still in the process of being screened to the *Ralstonia solanacearum* level at State or cooperating university diagnostic labs or are pending final determination to the race and biovar level at the USDA, APHIS, PPQ Beltsville, MD lab. Reporting of sample results is beginning to occur on a daily basis to the PPQ Regional offices and State offices. Several greenhouse establishments have been released if they conformed to criteria defined in the action plan.

FEBRUARY

February 26, 2003

On February 14, 2003, a letter to State Regulatory Officials was sent notifying them of confirmed U.S. detections of bacterial wilt disease caused by *Ralstonia solanacearum* race 3 biovar 2 on geranium plants of Kenyan origin. The confirmations at that time were from a total of four greenhouses in the states of Indiana, Illinois, and Wisconsin. Lists of several hundred destination greenhouse nurseries that received plants from two

different rooting stations in Michigan and New Hampshire, during shipping windows with the potential to contain infected Kenyan plant material, were compiled based on trace back information and information provided by industry. Hold notices and Emergency Action Notifications were, and are currently being issued to quarantine suspect plant material until conditions can be defined for symptom expression, sampling, and confirmation of *Ralstonia solanacearum* race 3 biovar 2. All confirmations to race 3, biovar 2 are made by our CPHST laboratory in Beltsville, MD after screening to the species level at State or cooperating university diagnostic laboratories. Since the initial notification to States, there have been two additional positive confirmations with a current total to date of one facility in Illinois, two in Indiana, two in Michigan, and one in Wisconsin. An action plan is in the final stages of development at PPQ headquarters in conjunction with the States, PPQ Regions, National Plant Board, and industry. The plan contains conditions to hold plant material, test it, release it if found to have no positive detections over a specified time and temperature period, dispose or destroy infected and associated plant material, and disinfect greenhouses with such material.